

'Custer's Revenge' bites the dust

By Drew Fetherston

"Custer's Revenge" was short and not so sweet: The video game cartridge, which invited players to help the un-uniformed cavalryman ravish a bound Indian maiden, has been removed from the market by its new American distributor.

Custer's defeat does not mean the end of home video cartridges with explicit sexual themes. Two others announced with "Custer's Revenge" remain on the market, and nine new games are almost ready for sale.

When the game was announced last fall, it brought a torrent of criticism, lawsuits and legislative attacks down on American Multiple Industries Inc., which had hoped to sell a million cartridges by the end of 1982.

Women Against Pornography led protests when the game was unveiled at trade shows; Atari Inc., for whose equipment the cartridge was designed, announced it would sue American Multiple Industries. In Suffolk County, Legis. Philip Nolan (D-Brentwood)

sponsored a move to ban sales of "Custer's Revenge," which prompted AMI to threaten a suit of its own. Nolan said yesterday no legal papers have yet been served.

According to the public relations firm that represented AMI, the company is "out of the picture" as far as the games go. A Hong Kong company is manufacturing the cartridges and its new distributor on this continent, Gamesource, decided not to handle "Custer's Revenge," saying through a spokesman that "we are in favor of good sexual fun between consenting images, but we don't feel racism or violence to women have any place in a video game."

AMI did manage to sell about 75,000 Custer cartridges, according to the spokesman, who declined to be identified.

The new games, which include "Knight on the Town," "Burning Desire" and "Philly Flasher" — the last set in the City of Brotherly Love — will be marketed in cases that can be opened only with a key. /H